

Message Text

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67

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-10 ISO-00 IO-14 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01

PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 ACDA-19 DPW-01 AID-20

DRC-01 NIC-01 /183 W

----- 080711

R 091122Z NOV 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8888

INFO AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

USDEL JEC PARIS

AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMCONSUL CAN THO

AMCONSUL DANANG

AMCONSUL NHA TRANG

UNCLAS SAIGON 19249

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PINS, MILI, VS

SUBJECT : SAIGON MEDIA REACTION TO GVN RETALIATORY BOMBING AT LOC

NINH AND BO DUC

REF : (A) SAIGON 19188; (B) SAIGON 19117

1. AS EXPECTED, THE SAIGON MEDIA NOVEMBER 9 GAVE PROMINENT COVERAGE TO THE GVN'S RETALIATORY AIR RAIDS NOVEMBER 7 AGAINST LOC NINH AND BO DUC.

2.PRESS REPORTING. ALL SAIGON DAILY NEWSPAPERS NOVEMBER 9 DEVOTED BANNER HEADLINES TO THE AIR RAIDS. CATHLIC HOA BINH HEADLINED: "THE WAR HAS REALLY BEGUN AGAIN." INDEPENDENT CHINH LUAN EXPLAINED IN ITS BANNER: "NOT SABOTAGING THE PARIS AGREEMENT, BUT ONLY PUNI- UNCLASSIFIED

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SHING THE COMMUNIST ATTACKS." MOST PAPERS HAD LONG FRONT-PAGE

STORIES BASED ON THE BRIEFING OF GVN MILITARY SPOKESMAN LT. COL. LE TRUNG HIEN (REF B). ONE THEME FREQUENTLY STRESSED WAS THAT THE TARGETS WERE GENUINELY MILITARY.

3. EDITORIALS. THREE NEWSPAPERS HAD EDITORIALS ON THE BOMBINGS. POINTING TO INTERNATIONAL REACTIONS AGAINST THE RECENT COMMUNIST ATTACKS, PRO-ADMINISTRATION QUAT CUONG WAS CONVINCED THAT WORLD OPINION CONSIDERED THE GVN RETALIATION LEGITIMATE. THE EDITORIALIST CONCLUDED: "OUR JUST CAUSE HAS SHONE CLEARLY BEFORE PUBLIC OPINION. FOR THE SAKE OF PEACE, WE WILL BE IMPLACABLE IN OUR RETALIATORY ACTION AGAINST THE STUBBORN COMMUNISTS." INDEPENDENT TIA SANG AND OPPOSITIONIST DAI DAN TOC TOOK A DIFFERENT APPROACH, STRESSING THE TENSION ARISING FROM THE ACTIONS OF BOTH SIDES. ACCORDING TO DAI DAN TOC, SINCE NEITHER SIDE "WILL BE ABLE TO ELIMINATE THE OTHER SIDE TOTALLY AND RAPIDLY," THEY SHOULD RESPECT THE PARIS AGREEMENT "WHICH, THOUGH IMPERFECT, CAN BE USED AS A BASIC FOUNDATION OF THE REALIZATION OF PEACE WITHIN A SPIRIT OF NATIONAL RECONCILIATION AND CONCORD."

4. RADIO AND TELEVISION. SAIGON RADIO AND TELEVISION HAVE AMPLY COVERED THE GVN BOMBINGS. THE PUNITIVE NATURE OF THE ACTION HAS BEEN A FEATURED THEME. ONE NOVEMBER 8 RADIO BROADCAST CITED THE GVN MILITARY SPOKESMAN'S REMARK THAT OTHER FORMS OF RETALIATION ARE POSSIBLE. THE RADIO ADDED: "OUR SPOKESMAN ALSO STRESSED THAT, IF THE COMMUNISTS VIOLATE THE CEASEFIRE ONE TIME, WE WILL PUNISH THEM TEN TIMES."

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